

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and following remarks.

I. Status of the Application

Claims 1-16 are pending. Claim 5 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claim 1 has been amended to recite an interlabial pad comprising a first absorbent body and a second absorbent body. Support for this amendment is found, for example, in Figures 4(b) and 4(c), which depict interlabial pads having first and second absorbent bodies. Claims 3, 6-8, and 16 have been amended to provide claim limitations with proper antecedent bases. Accordingly, by this Amendment no new matter has been added.

II. Claim Rejections

A. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph

Claims 8 and 16 have been rejected as being indefinite.

As to claim 8, the Examiner states that there is insufficient antecedent basis for the limitations “water permeable surface side sheet in said protruded area” and “said first absorbent body.” Claim 1 recites “a water permeable surface side sheet facing or body side” and an “absorbent body being enclosed in the water permeable surface side sheet.” Claim 1 has been amended to recite an absorbent that “includes a first absorbent body to form a protruding area.” Therefore, claim 1, as amended, recites a water permeable surface side sheet that encloses a first absorbent body in the protruding area. Claim 8, which depends directly or indirectly from claim 1, refers the region of the water permeable surface side sheet enclosing the protruding area, i.e., where the first absorbent body is enclosed. Accordingly, the amendment to claim 1 provides a proper antecedent basis for “water permeable surface side sheet in said protruded area” and “said first absorbent body” and overcomes the rejection of claim 8. Withdrawal of the rejection to claim 8 is requested.

Claim 16 has been rejected for a lack of antecedent basis for "said mini sheet piece." Claim 16 recites a wrapping body with the features of claim 15 and a folded mini sheet piece. A "mini sheet piece" is only recited in claim 11. Therefore, claim 16 has been amended to depend from claim 11 and to incorporate the wrapping body features of claim 15. Therefore, claim 16, as amended, has an antecedent basis for "said mini sheet piece." Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection to claim 16.

B. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)

Claims 1, 2, 5-7, and 9-11 have been rejected as being anticipated by McFall et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,183,587).

Claim 5 has been canceled rendering its rejection moot.

Claim 1 has been amended to recite a first absorbent body and a second absorbent body enclosed in surface side and back side sheets bonded together. The recited formulas (in particular, bulkiness and width) define a relationship that allows the absorptive capacity of the flat pad to be maximized without degrading wearability. McFall does not disclose first and second absorbent bodies enclosed together between bonded surface side and back side sheets. Therefore, McFall does not anticipate claim 1, and withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

Claims 2, 6, 7, and 9-11 depend directly or indirectly from claim 1 and are novel for at least the same reasons as claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection.

C. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1-5 and 9-13 have been rejected as being obvious over Johnson et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,595,392), and claims 14 and 15 as being obvious over Johnson in view of Farris et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,131,736).

Claim 1 has been amended to recite a first absorbent body and a second absorbent body enclosed in surface side and back side sheets bonded together. Neither Johnson nor Farris, alone or in combination, suggest first and second absorbent bodies enclosed in bonded surface side and back side sheets. Therefore, amended claim 1 is nonobvious over the prior art of record and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

D. Obviousness-Type Double Patenting Rejection

Applicants respectfully request that Applicants be given the opportunity to file a terminal disclaimer when all the pending claims are deemed to be allowable except for this rejection.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants submit that the application is in condition for allowance after a terminal disclaimer is filed. If there are any other issues remaining which the Examiner believes could be resolved through either a Supplemental Response or an

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Respectfully submitted,

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